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mode of study. Science teaches humility. Art is too often pursued with pride. True Art is indeed always humble, but most artists are men who have been accustomed to regard Art as distinct from Nature, and so plume themselves on what they suppose their own and especially human achievements. They do not see that great abundance and fulness of nature which their pictures will always come short of, but

yet should ever strive to reach; they become too satisfied with what they have done and produced. The student of Science perceives how little he has wrested from the great unknown, and is content to be patient and unwearied in the attempt to get more knowledge. Let the art-student look also on the il-limitability of nature, and how little, with his greatest efforts, he can express of it, and learn also suitable humility.

NATIONAL MUSIC.

MR. EDITOR: It has been asked, Whence comes the plaintive element of American popular airs, and songs?

The answer requires a comparison of the music of all the races represented here, for it is natural that American music, differing, as everything American-born does, from the foreign parent stock, should still show somewhat of the influence of blood. And American music, like the American people, shows traces of most of the leading races of Europe, in such degree, as to bury all other influences beyond the sight of the ordinary observer. The one class that has at present, and promises for the future, the most influence on American music, is the Irish. And America may congratulate herself that it is so, for the Lyke Wake dirge is a worthy parent, though as yet not known to the opera, and but little troubled with "thirds," "fifths," "counterpoint," &c.;—so much the better; we may well get strength to walk, before we go to the dancing-school.

To prove this claim of the Irish element, examine the principal kinds of music, classified for convenience sake, by nations, though the classification should be by races, but that many of them are yet nameless. Thus the Italian (real, not German opera), skimming lightly over the notes, rather dwelling on the languor;—expressing, softly,

dreamily, dying inflections, often light and lively; playful, but with a reserve of expression, as if its joy, though natural, was under some controlling influence; the joy of full ripeness, and the mellowing stage in power. In this compare it with the Scotch melody;—see "Dr. Beattie on Poetry and Music" for the particulars of the four different kinds of Scotch music, "namely, the southern melodies already noticed, the western or Gaelic airs, the northern or Strathspey music, and the species of brisk, exhilarating music distinguished by the name of reel, or dancing music, which cannot be considered as peculiar to any particular quarter." Of a different race, climate, and country, the Scotch rises quickly, and easily, as on the memory of great things; but loves to dwell on the falling, weary inflection, as of great things accomplished, as of rest for the great, and none to repeat their work; in this feeling of having lived to "the days of little men," Ossian expresses perfectly the feeling and expression common to both Scotch and Italian; a feeling that neither ever shakes completely off, for any length of time; and although the Scotch melody contains a different humanity, a more social fellow-feeling, a sort of lie-close-and-keep-warm expression, this is a very prominent feature, and one of its greatest characteristics, and peculiar charms.

Still, the gradual sinking from high action to repose, is the most universal feeling of all the varieties of Scotch music, from the Border melody to the "Wind that stirs the Barley." In the Spanish airs, this ripeness, this thing attained, and consequent sadness of "no more worlds to conquer," is quite strong, and therein the Spanish contains an element in common with the Scotch, and Italian. But the Spanish has also a self-dependence, a pride, not found in the Scotch sociability, or the Italian light-hearted thoughtlessness. There is a strength and dignity, in this energetic self-assertion of the Spanish character, that with never a great mercantile community, has made its language, of words, scarcely second to any, for territorial extension, or universal use; when overrun, it crops out through all other languages of the present day. This innate vim is strongly marked in Spanish music, now pushing, and yearning, anon controlled and reposing; this speaks a race life either more full and strong, more intense and energetic, than Scotch or Italian; or else less *passé*.

The Irish comes to us, on the contrary, unlike the Scotch and Italian, with their melancholy repose; it is wild, mournful, but hopeful, energetic; its wildest regret and sorrow, is expressed on the rising inflection; the swelling sound passes from a lower to a higher note, increasing in life and emphasis,—*vide* "The Last Rose of Summer." The whole bearing of the thought is expressed on the rising part of the spring, the highest part of the leap is not yet attained; whatever windfalls have dropped, the sorrow for them is felt by fruit still growing; is none the less deep, and uncontrollable, because the soul that feels it is in its youth, and not yet accustomed to think of the decay to come, does not yet feel its old age begin to press it into companionship with the departed. This energetic vim, felt in

all Irish, wake or jig, is so marked, that on hearing a lot of old tunes for the first time, the hearer had no difficulty in assigning each to its own nationality, whether Scotch fading, or Irish growing. The energy of the Irish, is a point of connection or similarity between that and the Spanish; but the rising Æolian swell, and the absence of any decaying mellowness, of anything *passé*, is the Irish par excellence, the peculiar charm of the "wake;" it tells of a race life still in its younger day, a vitality that has more in the future than in the past.

The German, or Central European music, from Tyrol to Bohemia, presents several varieties, but all agreeing in their characteristics; they hop and jump, from note to note, like the mountaineer, from crag to crag, with some little energy, though often weary, for the notes he strikes are as hard as the crags he leaps upon; and a stranger to such life soon gets footsore, and longs for silence; truly, the German music seems fond of cutting capers over rough ground, of showing its agility, not grace, and consists more in movement than in sound! Without self-control, whenever a new feat is proposed, it tumbles over the precipices, and breaks its shins on the rocks blindly. Paying little thought to yesterday or to-morrow, it shows a race-life on its summit, and that not above the clouds. The above applies from Switzerland to Poland.

The negro music of the Spanish Main and Southern United States, has some energy and longing in accelerating motion, the swelling sound rising at the last note, like the snap of a whip; a spasmodic feature noticeable in the negro's laugh, but, in his music, refined and toned, till, when heard at a distance, its effect is superior to the Jodle;—which seems to be its European form, though much overdone.

This seems a youthful and unripe state,

that will mellow with time; but it has not the innate strength, the heavy force of the Irish, nor the similar self-assertion of the Spanish; without the mourned past of the Italian and Scotch, it has with its hope of the future no definite wish, no determination; touching the surface lightly, and with little self-control; hoping, but not intending, some undefined blessing; more inclined to play with the present than to go on to the future, it speaks a race-life culminating, but without glory, and without sorrow; its plaintive tones are the sorrow of to-day, mingled with to-day's pleasures; its hope is the reaction of a light heart, between the moments of discontent and *ennui*.

The French music swells, and fades easily; its characteristic is, grace of motion, combined with sweetness of sound, full, with little or no reserve, though some self-control. When plaintive it yearns for the existing, though absent or unattainable; its past is forgotten, its future unheeded; rising and falling with equal grace, but little Æolian swell of the Irish, little Scotch longing regret, but perhaps more of the latter than the former, especially in the airs of Normandy; the airs of Provence should be even lighter, more elastic, more like the Italian; the whole is the voice of a race-life, self-absorbed, *passant*; rich in fancy and feeling, but of less energy than might have been expected.

The Scandinavian, from the huge anthems of "Tordenskiol" and "Nils

Juel" to the "Ung Soëman" and "Kjarlighed med et frit mod," shows much strength, swelling grandly, and falling with a fulness of satisfaction that leaves no room for hope or regret. There seems in this respect to be an element wanting in Scandinavian music that is not lacking in their poetry; but in place of it, perhaps, may be put the falling to a low note, gradually to rise with retarding motion, on the last sound. This, if not a Norwegian peculiarity, is certainly a characteristic. The whole of the Scandinavian music strikes its notes full, without reserve of self-control, and with a long swinging motion. The words *Gamle Norgé* seem to represent the whole scope of music to a Norwegian. In speaking of this Scandinavian music, the Jodle should be excepted; it is the connecting link between Sweden and Switzerland (see F. Bremer's book on "Switzerland"), and belonging to the mountains, is less heard among the travelling part of the nation than the more purely national airs. There is, probably, in Sweden still another music to be found when sought for, having a relationship to that of Central Asia. It should be wilder than the Scandinavian, with more self-control and delicate perception than anything from Mont Blanc to the Maelström, though perhaps showing affinity with the Cossack. Also, in Finland good music should be found, graceful in motion, and with some affinity to the Irish. But data on that, and all countries east of those mentioned are wanting.

THE SIXTH ANNUAL EXHIBITION OF THE ARTISTS' FUND SOCIETY.

If any one should mistake this exhibition for an exhibition of American art "of the period," he would be led to seriously misjudge that particular manifestation of humanity. American art, as it now exists, is not to be studied in these

galleries. Different artists have sent hither such different reports about themselves, that no comparative estimate of individuals is possible, and no conclusions can be formed respecting them as a body, or their work as a whole. One painter has